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ABSTRACT

As year 4 of a 7-year initiative to implement the School-to-Work (STW) Opportunities Act begins, 37 states have received implementation grants and 105 direct federally-funded and over 900 state-funded local partnerships exist. In 1997, technical assistance is available to any of the remaining 13 states ready for full-scale implementation. Notable progress in STW can be seen through site visits to STW implementation states, first-year findings from a 5-year independent national evaluation, and a state-designed progress measures process. Data show that 1 million of approximately 13 million secondary school students participated in one or more school-based STW activity between January-June 1996. From December 1995-June 1996, the number of businesses participating in STW partnerships has increased from 135,000 to 200,000. Businesses have increased their capacity to provide work-based learning opportunities. As of June 1996, nearly all local partnerships have at least one postsecondary institution participating in some STW activity. State challenges are to bring about "scale" by fostering a substate structure and sustain STW after federal funding ceases. Federal supporting activities include the following: technical assistance; building linkages with education, employers, and organized labor; support in serving every student; and public awareness strategies. Future needs are to increase parental involvement, support growth of employer participation, ensure state commitment, and serve out-of-school youth. (YLB)

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SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Honorable Albert Gore, Jr.
President of the Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the Departments of Education and Labor, we are pleased to submit this second report on activities carried out under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. Our Departments have joint responsibility for administering this law. The report shows how we are implementing the Act to meet its many goals. These include creating a high-quality school-to-work system and increasing opportunities for every student to prepare better for further education and careers.

Our assessment continues to be that the school-to-work effort shows promising signs of achieving the Congress' objectives. To date, 37 States and more than 1,000 communities have been funded for implementation and are putting in place the school and work-based components of school-to-work.

We appreciate the Congress' ongoing leadership and support for the aims of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. We look forward to keeping you apprised of the progress of this important initiative as it benefits our Nation's youth.

Sincerely,

Dick Riley

Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

Alexis M. Herman

Alexis M. Herman
Secretary of Labor

SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Honorable Newt Gingrich
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Sincerely,

Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Education

Alexis M. Herman
Secretary of Labor

Executive Summary

REPORT TO CONGRESS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT

September 1997

This Report to Congress on the Implementation of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 describes the progress that States and locally based public-private partnerships have made in building School-to-Work (STW) systems. More students are participating in educational activities that can enhance their career and postsecondary prospects. More employers are becoming active partners in providing applied learning opportunities. And more States and communities are putting in place the policies to make this initiative a successful and lasting effort in improving education and the caliber of our workforce. In this fourth year of a seven-year initiative, progress is measured not only by how successful States and localities have been in using STW to enhance a student's education, but, increasingly, by the degree to which they can sustain this initiative beyond the Federal investment, which ceases when the Act sunsets on October 1, 2001.

Administered by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act gives States seed money to design and implement their own comprehensive STW system. States and localities are given broad latitude in designing their own systems so long as each includes the Act's three components: work-based learning, school-based learning, and connecting activities. As defined in the legislation, STW systems also integrate academic and vocational education, link secondary and postsecondary education, provide learning opportunities at the work site, and fully involve the private sector.

School-to-Work prepares students for college and careers and motivates them to learn by demonstrating the relevance of what they study and giving them a sense of available career choices. In fact, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act is a cornerstone of an ambitious national initiative to encourage States and local communities to change how they educate students. It puts community partnerships at the helm of a strategy for systemic education reform that offers students the opportunity to learn the way experts say they learn best -- through application of rigorous academics. School-to-Work improves learning and offers communities a means for

preparing and educating the Nation's workforce for the next century. Because it recognizes that businesses need well educated employees, employers are key partners.

The Status of STW Implementation

Since last year's Report, 10 additional States (California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Texas) have been awarded five-year implementation grants, raising the number of Implementation States to 37. The other 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wyoming) plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the territories have received only development grants (to support planning for implementation) thus far.

Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants (UROG) were awarded in the past year to an additional 32 local partnerships that focus on the needs of youth who live or go to school in high-poverty areas, bringing the total number of UROGs to 85. Currently, there are also 29 communities that receive direct Local Partnership Grants from the Departments of Education and Labor. These communities are located in States that have not yet received an Implementation Grant or are in their first year of implementation funding. 137 communities have received either UROG or direct Local Partnership grants in the past three years. About 900 local partnerships are funded through State grants.

In the coming year, the Department will offer technical assistance and support to help as many of the remaining 13 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Territories that have received development grants as are interested in participating and demonstrating readiness to begin full scale implementation efforts.

Progress to Date

Notable progress in STW can be seen through: observations from site visits made to STW implementation States; the first year's findings from a five-year independent national evaluation of STW conducted by Mathematica Policy Research Inc.; and a State- designed Progress Measures process.

Participation. STW is taking hold in a majority of States and in more than 1,000 communities. States are committing to provide access to STW to every student, including out-of-school and high- risk youth, and youth with disabilities. Early data indicate that many students, schools, and employers are taking part in STW, although these same baseline numbers also reflect early struggles with comprehensive participation.

According to data reported by States:

- The number of local partnerships increased from 294 partnerships in 11 States in December 1995 to 932 nartnerships 41 States and Puerto Rico in June 1996.

- Of the 111,500 elementary and secondary schools in the United States, 23 percent offer at least one component of STW as of June 1996.

- Of the approximately 13 million secondary school students in the United States, one million participated in one or more school-based STW activity between January and June 1996.

- However, according to first year data being collected for the National Evaluation by Mathematica, only 2 percent of all secondary school students could be described as having participated in *comprehensive* STW activities, i.e., a career major with integrated curricula, and paid or unpaid work experience linked to school.

Site visit reports, the National Evaluation and state reports indicate that employers are increasingly committed to School-to-Work. Many are becoming involved in local STW partnerships and steering committees, providing work-based learning opportunities, and hosting teachers and counselors in internships.

- Between December 1995 and June 1996, the number of businesses participating in STW partnerships increased by 50 percent from 135,000 to 200,000.

- Businesses have increased their capacity to provide work-based learning opportunities. In December 1995, business offered approximately 53,000 work-based learning opportunities for students. By June 1996, local partnerships were reporting that employers provided 119,000 opportunities.

- In 1996, about 31 percent of the students who obtained paid jobs through school indicated they spent at least half of their time at the workplace being trained. By comparison only 13 percent of those who found a job on their own reported being trained in the workplace.

Foundations for STW The flexibility in the Act has encouraged a wide variety of approaches to STW as suggested in the State Profiles attached to this report. How a State or locality implements STW appears to depend on which agency administers it. In States where it is administered by a State Department of Education, STW usually is a means for achieving education reform. In other States, the emphasis may be on economic development or workforce preparation, depending on its operating organization. While these divergent strategies reflect local decision-making on how to implement STW, from a national perspective it is clear that STW must be incorporated into, rather than seen to be in competition with, a State's education reform in order to be successful.

States are building solid foundations for their STW systems through partnerships with other public and private initiatives. As intended by the legislation, States are leveraging STW funding from other sources and securing in-kind support. They are also using STW as a key school improvement strategy. A number of States have enacted legislation in support of educational reform and STW initiatives.

Staff Development. States and local partnerships recognize that staff development is an investment that will lead to long-term changes in teaching and developing a future workforce. Even so, pre-service and in-service training and credentialing of teachers, which are considered critical to increasing teacher understanding and practice of STW methodologies, are not yet a major focus.

Challenges Ahead

School-to-Work holds tremendous promise for its various stakeholders, but it demands in return their strong commitment to high standards and cooperation. Change is not easy and it will take time until significant numbers of students have moved through STW systems into the workforce. A number of areas must be addressed in the coming years to ensure that STW meets its full potential for students and their families, educators, businesses, and communities. These include:

1). Parental understanding of and involvement in STW. Parents need to be assured that STW does not limit opportunities but rather increases students' awareness and ability to take advantage of postsecondary education and a broad array of career options.

2). Continued growth of employer participation in STW. Fewer than one percent of the nation's employers are involved in STW. In order to promote greater employer participation (particularly with regard to offering work-based learning slots), there needs to be a better understanding of certain issues, including insurance and liability questions.

3). The tension between quality and quantity. We need to identify and develop many more high quality work-based learning opportunities for students.

4). Continued momentum by all States. It is important for the long-term viability of STW to maintain an ongoing commitment by all key parties. This has not yet happened in all States that have received implementation funding.

5). Support for STW after the Federal funding ceases. Public, institutional and financial support for STW must be cultivated to sustain it after the Federal grants end.

6). Ensure that out-of-school youth are adequately served in STW systems. Currently, the Departments of Education and Labor do not have data that capture the participation of out-of-school youth in STW. However a two-year study has been started to examine promising STW system and program practices for out-of-school youth, and demonstration projects focusing on implementing model STW initiatives for out-of-school youth have been awarded.

The Departments of Education and Labor have launched a broad information, technical assistance, and research and evaluation effort to address all of these challenges, as well as the concerns and needs of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

Implementation of School-to-Work is a long-term initiative where efforts are just beginning to seen. At this early stage, evidence suggests that STW is fundamentally changing how this country views education. STW may vary by State and by community, but we are beginning to see innovations in how students learn, in how teachers teach, and how employers work with schools, as well as how all of these players can work together to have a positive impact on our children's future.

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1997 REPORT TO CONGRESS
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT

Introduction

As this second annual Report to the Congress on the implementation of the School-to-Work Opportunities (STWO) Act is being published, we are starting the fourth year of a seven-year initiative. Currently, there are 37 States that have received Implementation Grants, 105 direct Federally-funded local partnerships, and more than 900 local partnerships funded by State implementation grants. The Act continues to be jointly adminstered by the Departments of Education and Labor (ED/DOL). This report will show the significant strides that have been made in the implementation of the Act and that School-to-Work (STW) is used and valued as an education and labor market reform strategy.

Unlike most legislation that is reauthorized regularly, Congress' intentions for the STWO Act were different. Funds under this Act are intended for venture or "seed" capital only. The Act is scheduled to sunset October 1, 2001.

The Act provides a national framework for building State and local systems to ensure that *any* student can achieve high levels of academic and technical skills, and prepare for further education and careers. A basic premise underlying the Act is that every student -- including the college bound -- can benefit from learning about careers, through learning by doing, and applying abstract concepts to real-life situations.

More than ever before, our economy and society require a higher level and more diverse set of skills. This places enormous pressure on the Nation's young people. College preparatory students cannot just learn abstract academic subjects. They need to see knowledge as it is applied in the real world. Vocational students must supplement job-specific skills with strong academic skills. Engaging in opportunities to discuss what educational and training opportunities and, ultimately, what careers fit their interests and aptitudes enhances students' abilities to make informed and educated decisions about their futures. Many high school

graduates drift among low-skill, low-wage jobs in their first 5-10 years in the job market. The experiences offered through STW systems can provide young people with the skills they need for well paying careers.

There is no single strategy for designing STW systems. States and local communities have utilized the flexibility available under the Act to design and implement STW systems that reflect regional differences in labor market needs, resources, and ongoing State priorities. Furthermore, States haven chosen to have STW take root within the context of education reform, workforce development, economic development, or a combination of the three. This flexibility has encouraged much of the richness and varied texture of STW systems across the country.

No matter how States and local communities choose to implement the legislation, STW is viewed as an effort to leverage, improve, and expand existing programs and initiatives to prepare young people for their future education and careers in a more integrated and comprehensive manner. The collaborative nature of STW provides different stakeholders the opportunity to go beyond categorical program limitations and to explore new ways of organizing and delivering education and training for all youth.

The data from several sources of information provide a multifaceted picture of local, State, and national progress towards meeting the vision of the legislation at this half-way point of implementation. This report provides:

- an update of the implementation status nationwide;
- research findings on implementation to date;
- a review of the national activities supported by the Departments on behalf of the STW effort; and
- a discussion of the achievements to date and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Three years of implementation have produced significant successes and identified challenges that State and localities are facing in their efforts to help students prepare for further education and careers. Evidence of progress during the past three years includes:

- a rapid "roll-out" of the Act with 37 States and more than 1,000 communities funded for implementation;
- a marked increase in the collaboration between schools and employers; and
- a solid advance in the integration of academic and vocational education, secondary and postsecondary linkages, and school and work linkages.

The remaining years of the Act will yield more insight into whether STW, with its emphasis on applied and contextual learning (including learning experiences outside the classroom), will be valued by students, parents, educators, and employers. Key questions remain: Can STW translate its initial energy and excitement into meaningful, long-term changes in how students are educated? Will the key features of STW systems started with Federal support be sustained after the Federal investment ends?

"...a researcher from a polymers company develops a curriculum module with a high school chemistry teacher...a middle school social studies teacher arranges for students to do a community service learning project at the county courthouse... an elementary school art teacher does a paid summer internship at an advertising agency...a high school guidance counselor arranges for five local employers to make in-class presentations to all the tenth graders in her school...an eighth-grade English class views a labor market video and does a research project on careers...an engineering professor at a local college integrates work-based learning into his teaching."

– Vermont School-to-Work Educator's Guide

Part I: KEY FEATURES OF THE ACT

The goals of the STWO Act are ambitious. They include:

- helping students achieve high-level academic and occupational skills;
- widening opportunities for all students to participate in postsecondary education and advanced training, and move into high-wage, high-skill careers;
- providing enriched learning experiences for low-achieving youth, school dropouts, and youth with disabilities; and assisting them in obtaining good jobs and pursuing postsecondary education;
- establishing the framework in which all States can create STW systems that are part of comprehensive education reform and career preparation;
- increasing opportunities for minorities, women, and people with disabilities, by enabling them to prepare for careers from which they traditionally have been excluded, and
- utilizing workplaces as active learning environments in the educational process.

The major features of STW are:

System Building: Under the Act, States and communities are developing long-lasting systems by building on and coordinating existing efforts in education reform, workforce development, and economic development. The Act supports integrated approaches to help all youth prepare for employment, drawing on schools, communities, and workplaces. Educators, employers, workers, government, community-based organizations, parents, and students are part of an integral whole, and each has a role to play.

Including All Students: The Act clearly intends every student to have an opportunity to participate in STW. It emphasizes that this means young people from a broad range of backgrounds and circumstances, including students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, students who have dropped out of school, students with limited-English proficiency, migrant children, and academically talented students. STW provides preparation for college and careers, moving away from the distinction between "college-bound" and "non-college-bound" students. It deliberately abandons the philosophy of "tracking" students into either college preparatory or vocational education programs. A basic premise of the law is that every student needs both an academic base and workplace skills to prepare for a productive career.

> Section 3 a)(1)(C), of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act outlines the intent of the Act to, "offer opportunities for all students to participate in performance-based education and training program that will (i) enable the student to earn portable credentials; (ii) prepare the students for first jobs in high-skill, high-wage careers; and (iii) increase their opportunities for further education, including education in a 4-year college or university."

STW Systems with Certain Core Elements: STW systems restructure education so that every student can be motivated to meet high academic and occupational standards. In a good STW system, students learn how academic subjects relate to work; after high school, they can choose to enter the workplace, college, or further training, confident that they have the skills to succeed.

The core elements in a STW system are: school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities.

School-based learning is instruction and curriculum that integrates academic and technical learning. The program of study must enable every student to meet high academic standards to prepare for postsecondary education and careers. School-based learning incorporates career awareness, career exploration, and counseling programs, the opportunity to select career majors by the 11th grade, and regularly scheduled student evaluations.

Work-based learning means that workplaces become active learning environments for students. High-quality work experiences give students the chance to apply abstract concepts and principles while learning vital workplace skills in a hands-on, "real-life" setting. Working in teams, solving problems, and meeting employers' expectations are workplace skills that students learn best in practice under the supervision of adult mentors. Work-based learning includes job training and work experiences that coordinate with classroom learning, workplace mentoring and instruction in general workplace competencies, and that cover -- to the extent possible -- all aspects of an industry. Work-based learning is built around career majors that students choose, and can ultimately lead to the award of a skill certificate.

Connecting activities are the "glue" that hold STW efforts together. Linking schools and workplaces does not happen naturally. It requires a range of activities to integrate school and work to ensure that the student is not the only thread that ties the two together. Connecting activities match students with employers, secure school-site mentors as liaisons with employers, provide technical assistance to employers and schools, provide services and information to parents and other stakeholders, link participants with community services, collect and analyze information regarding post-program outcomes for participants, and connect youth-development strategies with employer and industry strategies for upgrading workers' skills.

Partnerships: The Act calls for broad-based public/private partnerships among businesses, schools, students and parents, organized labor and other stakeholders at the State and local levels to collaborate in STW system-building. This reflects the Act's intent that school and work be linked to improve education.

The Act also encourages new levels of collaboration within a State to align its initiatives and maximize funding in support of education reform and heightened employment goals. State partnership members should include: the Governor, representatives of the State educational agency, and State officials responsible for economic development, employment, job training, post-secondary education, human resources, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and the private sector.

At the local level, the law requires that employers, educators, union representatives or employee associations, and students be included in all STW partnerships. It also encourages participation by other groups with a stake in the system, such as local elected and appointed officials, community-based organizations, proprietary institutions, postsecondary institutions education, and private-industry councils. These partnerships provide the basis for the broad-based community support necessary to establish STW systems.

Flexibility: States and localities have broad discretion in how to establish and implement their STW systems. They design systems that reflect the input of State legislatures, local school boards, employers, and parents. They respond to economic and labor market needs. They incorporate their strategies for education reform. They utilize local resources. They have the flexibility to choose their own service-delivery mechanisms and establish their own governance structures. Finally, if there are Federal education and job training requirements that stand in the way of implementing a STW system tailored to their particular circumstances, they are encouraged to seek waivers.

Three Integral Linkages

School-to-Work and Education Reform: States and local communities have embarked on a quest to bring about excellence in American education. At the Federal level, the GOALS 2000: Educate America Act is the landmark school reform legislation that establishes a framework for this effort. It establishes conditions for improving student achievement through higher expectations for all children, increasing parent and community involvement, making schools safe and drug-free, improving professional development, increasing flexibility through waivers from Federal regulations, and supporting long-term and system-wide efforts. The pieces of education reform that must be aligned include curriculum, instructional strategies and materials, teacher preparation and certification, and student assessment with high academic standards.

STW enhances the educational reform effort by: motivating students to achieve at higher academic levels, providing guided educational experiences outside the classroom, and a structured approach to career development. STW does not "track" students; it strives to open up more opportunities for them. STW couples academic standards of what students should be able to do in specified academic disciplines with occupational skill standards that specify the skills necessary in broadly defined occupational clusters. What results are clear goals for every student regarding the knowledge and skills necessary for productive employment and further education.

School-to-Work and Economic Development: Changes in the global economy and rapidly emerging technologies are dramatically changing the economic environment in which American businesses and workers compete. Success in this rapidly changing economy requires new business structures and processes characterized by flexible uses of technology and new forms of work organization that reduce hierarchy and encourage the involvement of workers in decision making. Over the past several years, economic development initiatives have expanded to provide services that businesses need to develop high skill, high-wage jobs in their chosen locale.

The STWO Act provides a timely response to one of the primary concerns of businesses across the Nation -- the need for a highly-skilled workforce. STW initiatives are the framework for an enhanced form of education that links learning in the classroom with learning in the workplace. The integration of STW systems into a comprehensive set of economic-development activities can help address a critical need articulated by businesses, spur economic growth, and equip young people with the knowledge and skills necessary for further learning and work.

School-to-Work and Workforce Development: In the past several years, the Departments have encouraged States and communities to coordinate the administration and delivery of their education and training programs with the aim of developing a comprehensive workforce-development system. Coordinating these disparate programs into a single workforce development system helps provide youth and adults with a seamless progression of opportunities to prepare them for a career, and in so doing, creates skilled workers that enable employers to be competitive.

Workforce development systems comprise three primary sub-systems -- youth development and preparation for employment, adult work entry, and worker retraining and transition assistance. One of the greatest challenges facing those striving to develop workforce development systems is to restructure and to improve programs targeted to youth. For many young people, the existing education system and second-chance education and training programs have provided only limited prospects for career development and the transition to high-skill, high-wage employment. The STWO Act can prepare a framework to coordinate a range of programs and initiatives aimed at preparing all youth for productive careers and lifelong learning.

"My teaching strategy, I'm sure, will change due to this [STW] experience. I have learned that simply having knowledge about a certain area is not enough. One must be able to utilize that knowledge and apply it to a variety of new and different situations. Our society is becoming more complex even as technology makes our jobs simpler, and our students need to be taught how to work together towards a common goal if they are to be successful in tomorrow's world. This is what I intend to emphasize as I go back to the classroom this year."

Louise Cox
Mathematics Teacher
Brownsville Area High School
Pennsylvania

"Most kids don't know what they want to do after graduation. They have no idea what the 'real world' is like. School-to-Work not only helps to show them what is out there and what they need to succeed, but also gets their foot in the door."

Jose Bernal
Teacher at Amphitheater High School
Tucson, Arizona

PART II: IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

The STWO Act anticipates that States, communities, and the Federal government will have made enough progress toward creating sustainable STW systems by the time the law sunsets in October 2001. The Federal investment for STW is intended to support the development and early implementation of State and locally designed systems that integrate local, State, and other Federal funds, rather than create a new program dependent on a separate funding stream. Federal funds offer incentives for innovation driven by local needs, and foster collaborative efforts to

share information, measure outcomes, and further STW nationwide. States, communities, U.S. Territories, and American Indian tribes and organizations receive at least 12 out of every 13 Federal dollars appropriated. The remaining funds are used to fund national activities to support these State and local efforts.

The phased funding plan and implementation timetable established for creating nationwide comprehensive STW coverage is proceeding as anticipated. The plan takes into consideration available resources, establishes funding and partnership criteria, identifies entities ready to implement STW systems, and addresses technical assistance needs to bring all STW partnerships to a consistently high level of quality in a timely manner.

State Development Grants: All 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories have received noncompetitive STW Development Grants. These are designed to help States begin developing statewide STW systems. They may be renewed until a State receives an Implementation Grant. Funds may be used flexibly. A total of $32 million has been awarded, with the average grant about $430,000. By September 30, more than $2 million had been awarded to the seven U.S. Territories.

Implementation Grant States

1994	
Kentucky	**New Jersey**
Maine	**New York**
Massachusetts	**Oregon**
Michigan	**Wisconsin**
1995	
Alaska	**New Hampshire**
Arizona	**North Carolina**
Colorado	**Ohio**
Florida	**Oklahoma**
Hawaii	**Pennsylvania**
Idaho	**Utah**
Indiana	**Vermont**
Iowa	**Washington**
Maryland	**West Virginia**
Nebraska	
1996	
California	**Nevada**
Connecticut	**New Mexico**
Louisiana	**Rhode Island**
Minnesota	**Tennessee**
Missouri	**Texas**

State Implementation Grants: To date, 37 States have successfully competed to receive State Implementation Grants (see the table above). These grants are one-time, five-year venture capital investments to help every State and U. S. Territory establish STW systems. Eight States

are entering the fourth year of their grant, 19 are entering the third year of their grant, and 10 States are about to enter the second year of their grant. The dollar amounts allocated to each of the Implementation Grant States over their five-year grant period peak in the second year with declining amounts in the last three years. These States have in turn awarded funds to more than 900 local partnerships, whose initial funding amounts and subsequent years' funding are set by the States and, by and large, also peak and decline over the life of their grants. The 1997 appropriation of $400 million for the STWO Act will allow the remaining 13 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the seven U.S. Territories -- which have only received Development Grant funding -- to be awarded an Implementation Grant if they meet the criteria established by the Act.

In the coming year, the National School-to-Work Office (NSTWO) will focus its efforts on helping to prepare the 13 Development Grant States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the seven U.S. Territories to meet the statutory requirements for implementation. Each of these grantees must demonstrate interest in participating and readiness to begin full-scale implementation efforts. All are eligible to receive technical assistance and feedback through an extended application period.

Local Partnership Grants: Reflective of the Act's intention that STW initiatives be locally driven, the STW grant funding structure is designed so that local STW partnerships receive the majority of available STW funds over the seven-year duration of the legislation.
As of September 30, 1997, 137 communities have received a total of $158 million in direct Federal funding through either local partnership or Urban/Rural Opportunity Grants. Another 900 local partnerships are funded through State grants.

- *State-funded local partnership grants*: The majority of Federal STW funding received by States must go to local partnerships to develop local STW systems for in-school and out-of-school youth. The Act requires States to subgrant 70 percent in the first year, 80 percent in the second year, and 90 percent in the third and succeeding years of an Implementation Grant.

- *Direct Federally-funded local partnership grants*: Direct competitive grants are awarded to local partnerships in States that have not yet received an Implementation Grant or are in their first year of implementation funding. These partnerships can be practical models, informing State system-building efforts, and serving as resources for other local partnerships. These grants end when the State enters its second year of an Implementation Grant, at which time the partnership is incorporated into the State's funding structure.

  Technical assistance is provided to direct local grantees by the Departments' regional project staff, and by the NSTWO, which hosts regional grantee meetings and grantee Institutes.

- *Direct Federally-funded Urban/Rural Opportunities Grants (UROG)*: These grants support specific strategies to address the multiple needs of urban and rural in-school and out-of-school youth in high poverty areas, including comprehensive youth development.

  Ten percent of the Act's appropriation must be used for UROG grants. Grants are awarded for five years. In the first round of competition in Fiscal Year (FY) 1994, $10 million was distributed to 21 partnerships. In FY 1995, $7.5 million was awarded for continuation grants and an additional $17 million was invested in 32 new partnerships. FY 1996 funds are being used to invest $35 million dollars in 30-40 new partnerships and in continued funding to grantees from rounds one and two.

  Technical assistance is also provided to UROG grantees by the Departments' regional staff, as well as the NSTWO.

Programs for Indian Youth: The Act requires that up to one-half of one percent be set aside to serve Indian youth and involve schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. To date, $2.6 million has been invested in 18 tribal partnerships to continue ongoing initiatives and make new

STW investments across diverse tribal areas. Indian partnerships may apply for renewable Development Grants of up to $30,000/project year and/or Implementation Grants of up to $100,000 per year. It is anticipated under the Act that investments in tribal STW initiatives will provide opportunities for youth to acquire marketable academic and occupational skills to improve the economic viability of tribal communities.

Technical Assistance and Review Process for the Remaining Development Grant States and U.S. Territories: In Program Year 1997 (July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998), the Departments will offer technical assistance and support to help any of the remaining 13 Development Grant States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Territories that are interested in participating and demonstrating readiness to begin full-scale implementation efforts.

Development Grant States and U.S. Territories

Alabama	Wyoming
Arkansas	District of Columbia
Delaware	Puerto Rico
Georgia	American Samoa
Illinois	Commonwealth of Northern Marianas
Kansas	Federated States of Micronesia
Mississippi	Guam
Montana	Marshall Islands
North Dakota	Palau
South Dakota	Virgin Islands
South Carolina	
Virginia	

The Act outlines key components that all State systems must include, but does not require that funds be awarded competitively. However, in the first three years, limited resources and the large pool of States eligible to apply made it necessary to use a competitive process to select those most ready to begin implementing statewide systems.

The Departments modified the earlier grant award process to help meet the goal of bringing all States on board by the fall of 1998. This modified, noncompetitive process allows the Federal and non-Federal peer reviewers and the State to work together toward the common goal of producing a high-quality, approvable application, rather than separating the development of the application from its evaluation, as has been done in previous years. In the 1997 review, the States will still have to meet the same high standards, but will have the opportunity to have a

more open dialogue with the STW national and regional staff during the application process. Changes include the following:

- **Extended application period:** In past competitions, States had approximately two months to finalize and submit applications. In 1997, applications can be filed at any time during a 12-month period. This will allow State teams additional time to resolve partnership and design issues, and submit their plans according to their own time lines.

- **Dedicated technical assistance:** Each State has been assigned a Federal technical assistance/review team that is involved in all aspects of the review, from initial assistance to final funding discussions. This team includes the State's Project Officer, members of the NSTWO, staff drawn from the Departments and non-Federal reviewers. Technical assistance is available for both on-and off-site consultations on STW issues, required core elements, and the review process, to discuss drafts of the State's proposal, and to clarify general Federal and specific programmatic requirements. Each State will have access to timely and accurate support throughout the review process.

- **Ongoing feedback:** In prior years, policies relating to competitive grants allowed for little communication with States during a competition. During this round, which will be designated as noncompetitive, staff of the Departments may communicate with applicants throughout the process, including reviewing drafts, discussing technical assistance needs, and helping States access expertise in areas where assistance is needed.

- **Opportunities to address weaknesses:** In prior years, applications that failed to address the STW criteria were simply not funded. During this noncompetitive program year, if the review team identifies areas of the application that need improvement, the team will request more detail or specific assurances from the State, until all criteria are met. The States have until May 1998, to demonstrate that they meet the STW criteria.

- **Compressed funding period:** States funded for implementation in 1994-96 received

five-year grants. However, because the Act is scheduled to expire in 2001, the Departments expect the last appropriation for this initiative to be for FY 2000. This would allow States with Implementation Grants funded in 1997 only four years of Federal STW funding. To ensure that these States are financed at levels comparable to those of prior years, the Departments intend to give remaining grantees, during a four-year period, the total amount they would have received through a five-year grant.

With the May 29 Federal Register notice announcing the 1997 Implementation Grants, the NSTWO began efforts to engage the remaining 13 Development Grant States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in implementation. A Development Grant Institute was held to kick-off the process. Each Development Grant State was invited to send a team of key STW partners to this technical assistance and strategic planning workshop. *Ten State teams chose to attend.* The workshop was geared to produce: 1) a thorough understanding of the elements of a STW system and how these elements are taking shape in other States; 2) a shared understanding, for both the Development Grant State teams and the Federal staff, of the selection criteria and State-specific issues; and 3) a template and process to help States develop effective proposals and detailed workplans for STW.

The peer review teams will continue individualized work with the State teams, and will help them develop strategies and time frames for their applications. New awards will be announced as each State demonstrates its readiness for implementation.

I believe business has a responsibility to prepare young people for a future where it is still possible to reach personal goals and achieve success. School-to-Work is an opportunity for business people to contribute to a student's education – and develop a good employee and citizen. It's a step into the future."

Henry Primeaux
President and CEO
Crown Auto World
Tulsa, Oklahoma

PART III: FINDINGS ON STW IMPLEMENTATION

The Departments have analyzed information gathered from site visits made in 1997 to 19 Implementation Grant States to determine State and local grantee progress. State-submitted quarterly reports informed the site visits, which were made to States representing a cross section of those that received Implementation Grants in 1994 and 1995.

School-to-Work Site Visit States

Alaska	New Jersey
Arizona	New York
Colorado	North Carolina
Florida	Ohio
Hawaii	Oklahoma
Kentucky	Oregon
Maryland	Vermont
Massachusetts	Washington
Nebraska	West Virginia
	Wisconsin

STW research on implementation progress is also included from: 1) a five-year independent national evaluation of STW, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research Inc.; 2) a State-designed progress measures process; and 3) State-sponsored evaluations and longitudinal studies.

Mathematica In-Depth Study States	
Florida	Michigan
Kentucky	Ohio
Maryland	Oregon
Massachusetts	Wisconsin

The findings covered in this section result from these sources. *Please note that these research findings reflect the status of implementation at the time of data collection.*

Mathematica's national evaluation consists of three analytical components: 1) in-depth case studies in eight States (see box); 2) a student survey from a representative sample of twelfth graders in STW partnerships in the eight States; and 3) a local partnership survey. Data derived from the first two components are summarized here. It is important to stress that the national evaluation data summarized here represent a broad cross section of States who received STW funding in FY 1994 and FY 1995, but are not representative, in a statistical sense, of the 37 States currently funded with five-year Implementation Grants. Those representative data will be contained in the Mathematica Report due in early 1998 and will be summarized in the 1998 Report to Congress. Findings from the case studies, conducted in spring 1996, are the result of observation and interpretation; findings from the student survey are quantitative estimates of students' reported participation in STW activities. A summary of Mathematica's early findings on first steps toward STW systems in the eight in-depth study States is reprinted in this report. A full summary of Mathematica's findings can be read in its April 1997 report, "Partners in Progress: Early Steps in Creating School-to-Work Systems."

MATHEMATICA NATIONAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF EARLY FINDINGS FOR IN-DEPTH STUDY STATES: FIRST STEPS TOWARD SCHOOL-TO-WORK SYSTEMS

1. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act has set in motion widespread efforts to change education and the way that employers and educators collaborate. Educators and employers alike in large numbers are excited about the prospects for linking school and workplace learning to prepare students better for successful careers.

2. States have begun building a system infrastructure by creating employer incentives, promoting career development models, facilitating college enrollment, and defining target careers clusters. Only one of the eight States has so far done all of these.

3. STW concepts have been made a central element of broader education reform in two of the eight in-depth study States. In some other States, STW priorities are, at this early stage, peripheral to other education reforms.

4. The most widely available aspect of STW components are those activities designed to improve students' career awareness. At this early State, however, few schools deliver a coherent career development sequence.

5. Changes in school curriculum (such as career majors and integrating academic and vocational instruction) so far are a lower priority than career development or workplace activities.

6. Many local partnerships are concentrating early efforts on promoting workplace activity. There are difficult obstacles to overcome, however, in efforts to expand the scale of structured, extended activities linked to the school curriculum as envisioned in the STWOA.

7. Student participation in some specific STW activities is already common, but few students so far participate in a full range of STW activities. In the baseline cohort of 1996 seniors, two percent had taken part in a variety of career development activities, school-based career majors, and workplace activity linked to high school curriculum. (Follow-up surveys will be used to report on postsecondary education and skill certification.)

8. A widespread set of local partnerships has been created. At this early stage of development, most partnerships have taken just modest steps toward creating common policies and practices, spanning multiple school districts and employers. The long-term role of local partnerships as important institutions is likely to depend on developing functions that schools and employers value enough to support after Federal funding expires.

Source: Partners in Progress: Early Steps in Creating School-to-Work Systems -- Executive Summary, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. April 1997

The progress measures data are collected annually for common national performance indicators that form the core of States' performance measurement systems. The performance measures are collected from local partnerships funded directly by the Federal government or operating with subgrants within their Implementation Grant State. These data are submitted first to the States and then to the NSTWO. Data reported here results from a survey covering the period January 1, 1996 -- June 30, 1996, to which 85 percent of local partnerships responded. A full summary of the 1996 progress measures data can be found in the June 1997 report, "School-to-Work Progress Measures: A Report to the National School-to-Work Office," by MPR Associates.

The findings of the informal State site visit reports and the more formal research findings are summarized under three categories: 1) system-building (establishing the core components that form the foundation of STW); 2) scale (reaching a critical mass of students and employers); and 3) sustainability (continuing the implementation of STW after the sunset of the Federal investment).

SYSTEM BUILDING

A number of core elements need to be put in place for a State or community to ensure an integrated approach to STW implementation. Such efforts must build on and coordinate existing efforts in education reform, workforce development, and economic development. The core system-building elements of STW include:

- STW opportunities are intended for every student.
- Staff development investments and capacity-building approaches need to cover all levels of professional staff associated with STW systems.
- Employers and labor unions play a key role in building STW systems.
- Learning is organized around career majors, which provide a context for learning and underscore the connection between school and work.
- States have identified a "roll-out" strategy and utilize an appropriate "substage" structure to manage system expansion.

Every Student: States with STW Implementation Grants are seeing value in providing STW opportunities to all students, from the at-risk to the academically talented. In fact, according to site visits, quarterly reports, and State and local evaluations, providing such opportunities appears to be a priority for most States. In particular, States are targeting their attention to include out-of-school and at-risk youth in STW. There is widespread acknowledgment of the difficulty of serving out-of-youth within STW systems. Serving youth with disabilities also appears to be a high priority.

Strategies for encouraging students to access STW include publishing resource guides and other documents addressing "all students" or particular groups, collecting information on students' participation, targeting outreach to students, "all students" sessions in conferences, and teacher training. States have launched statewide public awareness strategies to inform youth and other stakeholders about STW and its components. Utah's STW public service spots feature Bill Cosby talking with young people about their futures. Among the most successful strategies to include every student in STW opportunities are those provided through broad-based changes in

curriculum or through expanded career guidance programs, and by instituting the use of individual student career plans.

Progress measures data indicate that between January and June 1996, one million high school students in the United States participated in one or more of the various school-based activities related to STW. As of June 1996, 23 percent of the roughly 111,500 elementary and secondary schools in America were engaged in STW. Reporting partnerships covered 5,400 high schools serving approximately four million students. Specifically, the 1996 progress measure data indicated that:

- over 3,000 high schools in reporting partnerships indicate that they have classes which use *some* career-related curriculum to just over 1,000,000 students.
- 2,700 high schools in reporting partnerships had classes *integrating* career-related and academic instruction which involved over 700,000 students.
- over 2,300 high schools in reporting partnerships had classes in which the connection was made between core academic course work, career-related course work, *plus* work-based learning experiences. This involved over 280,000 students.

Between 1995 and 1996, the progress measures data showed that STW activities increased:

- from 7 percent to 9 percent in elementary schools;
- from 18 percent to 28 percent in middle schools; and
- from 35 percent to 44 percent in high schools.

The Mathematica evaluation found that student participation in career development was high (66 percent) even in 1996, our baseline year. The student survey of seniors in eight States showed that "almost 80 percent had at some time in high school completed interest inventories, more than half had gone on a worksite visit with a school group, and about a quarter had done job shadowing at least once." However, the student survey results also demonstrated that very few (two percent) students in the baseline 1996 cohort of seniors could be described as having participated in c*omprehensive* career development activities, i.e., a career major with integrated curricula, and paid or unpaid work experience linked to school. It is important to remember that STW had been in operation for only one year at the time the students were surveyed.

Staff Development/Pre-service Training: Teachers are the primary focus of States' professional development activities, which include providing STW awareness for existing teachers as well as Pre-service education. Most States have teacher internship programs, particularly during the summer. Several offer incentives, including stipends, reimbursement of expenses, college credits, and/or renewal credit toward certificates. Pre-service training on STW is less developed in most States. Some States, such as Maryland, support new teacher training with grants to universities. Massachusetts developed a mentor-training program by contracting with its community college system. STW, however, is not yet systemically included in many State university programs. More progress needs to be made in developing comprehensive training routines for non-educator stakeholders such as mentors and worksite supervisors.

STW Institutes that use content experts and trained facilitators are becoming an important vehicle for providing technical assistance and professional development to all level of stakeholders involved in STW. States that have conducted or planned to conduct STW Institutes for professional development include: Iowa, Maryland, New York, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.

Employer/ Labor Participation: Encouraging employer/labor participation is a priority among the States. Employers and labor representatives are becoming more involved by participating on boards and steering committees at both the State and local levels, helping to identify skills and design skill certificates, and providing work-based learning opportunities. State officials are typically recruiting employers through chambers of commerce and industry associations. In some cases they are offering financial incentives.

Colorado recently passed legislation offering a 10 percent tax credit to employers that provide paid work-based experience to students who are involved in a STW program. Minnesota has enacted legislation that provides funds in 1998 for employers who offer student/teacher internships. Maryland requires that its local labor market teams spend at least 25 percent of their

implementation funds on an employer incentive fund. This is modeled after the State's fund, which provides challenge grants to a consortia of employers, trade associations, and labor organizations.

Concerns about child labor laws and insurance/liability remain a barrier to more widespread work-based learning opportunities in several States. A task force of STW personnel led by Vermont has been addressing issues related to liability and students participation in work-based experiences. Along with Vermont, the task force consists of representatives from Oklahoma, Minnesota, New Mexico, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Maryland, as well as the AFL-CIO, the Human Resource Development Institute, the National Governors' Association and the insurance industry.

Progress measure findings indicate that between December 1995 and June 1996, the number of businesses participating in STW partnerships increased by 50 percent. In December 1995, 135,000 businesses participated in STW partnerships. Between January and June 1996 over 200,000 businesses were reported to be participating. A National Association of Private Industry Councils survey conducted in July 1997 indicated that 67 percent of the 640 local Private Industry Councils were participating as members of local STW partnerships.

The progress measures also show that businesses have increased their capacity to provide work-based learning opportunities. In December 1995, businesses offered approximately 53,000 different work-based learning slots for students. By June 1996, local partnerships were reporting that employers had provided 119,000 slots. Mathematica found that about 31 percent of the students obtaining paid jobs through school indicated they spent at least half of their time at the workplace in training. By comparison only 13 percent of those who found a job on their own reported training in the workplace. Also of note, between December 1995 and June 1996, 59 percent of all work-based learning opportunities provided were sponsored by small business establishments.

Where labor involvement in STW is concerned Mathematica found that organized labor played a limited role at the State and local level. Examples, however, can be found of labor unions making important contributions, participating in partnerships, developing materials to help students learn about the role of unions in the workplace and union members serving as worksite mentors.. New York has developed guidelines for organized labor involvement in STW partnerships which have subsequently been distributed to all labor representatives in local partnerships. In some States, such as West Virginia, labor has developed curriculum for course offerings. According to Mathematica and the site visit reports, there are a number of reasons for limited labor participation. These obstacles include inadequate outreach by partnerships, limited knowledge of STW by labor, a small local union presence and a fear of displacing older workers by involving large numbers of students in unionized workplaces.

> ***"A School-to-Work system provides students with an awareness of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in the workplace and a pathway to achieve them. High-quality workplace learning, coupled with contextualized school-based learning is an effective way of helping all students achieve high academic standards and career readiness."***
>
> *Paul Cole*
> *Secretary-Treasurer*
> *New York State AFL-CIO*

Career Majors: In its evaluation of STW in 1996, Mathematica found that career majors were not a high priority for, most States. By contrast, the STW site visits, which took place a year later and covered 19 States found that at least half of the States have developed career majors/clusters or pathways, and students have started to use them beginning in high school. STW staff site visits confirm the Mathematica finding that two approaches have been taken by States to develop career majors: 1) a "program foundation" model that builds on programs such as Tech-Prep or youth apprenticeship, or 2) a "school restructuring" in which entire schools are reorganized around broad career themes. Most often, local school districts are allowed to choose the extent to which they follow State models or customize them at the individual school level. As intended in the STWO Act, the models are generally flexible, allowing students to gain more sophisticated knowledge about careers and change their career majors as their interests evolve.

For example, Arizona has a three-year plan to promote the State's six identified career pathways: Arts/Communications/Humanities; Business Systems; Engineering/Industrial Systems; Health Services; Natural Resources; and Social/Human Services. It is currently assessing the need for related curriculum and professional development. In Connecticut, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association helped to identify the State's eight career clusters: Arts and Media; Business and Finance; Construction Technologies and Design; Environmental, Natural Resources and Agriculture; Government, Education, and Human Services; Health and Biosciences; Retail, Tourism, Recreation and Entrepreneurship; and Technologies: Manufacturing, Communication and Repair. Florida has developed occupational clusters based on labor market analysis. Local partnerships are able to choose which clusters are most appropriate to them and occasionally develop new clusters. Kentucky has developed fourteen career clusters/majors and a Guide to Selecting Career Clusters. Oklahoma has adopted thirteen clusters as a statewide framework, and allowed its locals the flexibility to determine which to implement.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) also collects and publishes information on STW efforts in States. ECS reports that "creating a unified structure for academic and workplace standards has engaged the largest number of the States this year, whether funded under the STWO Act or not. There have been at least two distinct approaches to this integration. In some cases, the emphasis has been on creating curricular frameworks." Examples include New Hampshire which is building Career Education, a curricular framework to become part of State assessments in grades 3, 6, and 10. (Other States developing curricular frameworks and cited by ECS are Maryland, New York, Illinois, New Mexico and Utah.) ECS further states that, "Another strategy has been the use of graduation requirements to connect academics with career preparation. New Jersey, for example, requires students to have a career major and a work-based learning experience before high school graduation."

Postsecondary Institutions: As of June 1996, progress measures indicate that nearly all reporting local partnerships had at least one postsecondary institution, public or private,

participating in some STW activity; 37 percent reported at least one four-year postsecondary institution's participation.

In its national evaluation of the same year, Mathematica observed that in the instances where postsecondary institutions were taking an active leadership role, it was generally attributed to the STW partnership's being an outgrowth of a pre-existing Tech-Prep consortium. Other than sitting on governing boards, Mathematica also found that the role of postsecondary institutions in STW was not well-defined.

STW site visit reports and States' own observations in 1997 indicate that building connections with postsecondary institutions is one of the major challenges to be addressed as STW systems mature. States are addressing how to aid students in moving from K-12, to two-year and four-year institutions through articulation and transfer policies and modifying postsecondary admissions criteria.

New York State is working with public, private, urban and rural two- and four-year institutions to address assessment strategies that will measure work-based learning opportunities and connect with academic achievement. Additionally, New York has attempted to engage public schools by identifying a number of postsecondary institutions as the lead in local partnerships. State University Deans of Education in Ohio, in collaboration with private colleges and universities in the State, are developing curriculum and work-based learning experiences focused around STW for teachers and guidance counselors in training, along with a leadership curriculum for practicing teachers. In Massachusetts, the Chancellor of Higher Education has included STW as one of a limited number of priority areas for incentive funds for campus improvement available to community colleges, State colleges and the campus of the University of Massachusetts.

Aligning Federally-funded Local Partnerships and UROGs: The Federally-funded Local Partnership Grants and UROGs provide additional opportunities for innovation, variety, and increased resources in developing STW systems. Ultimately, these local grantees will need to be incorporated into State systems because the Act requires that local and UROG applications

reflect coordination with the State. States that have effectively modeled this transition include Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Oregon, and Minnesota. The degree to which these Federally-funded partnerships have been incorporated into State systems varies across States. Although States are required to approve local grant applications in order to ensure their consistency with the State plan, NSTWO staff have observed a number of States struggling to incorporate their Federally-funded local partnerships. Among the difficulties observed: 1) the Departments fund local entities, but the State may choose to develop a regional roll-out structure; 2) the State may choose to fund a different entity when it is time to assume funding for the partnership; and 3) five-year UROG grantees may not choose to work cooperatively with the State since they have an independent funding source.

Information Sharing Across Partnerships: The States are exchanging lessons learned, best practices, and ideas among their local partnerships and sub-State structures. Several States have sponsored institutes, conferences, and/or workshops for local partnerships or other audiences. Several hold monthly meetings for local partnership directors or regional coordinators. Other communication mechanisms include Internet web sites, directories, and newsletters. Several States have noted difficulty in sharing "lessons learned" with Federally-funded local partnerships.

Regional sub-State structures in some States (Maryland, Massachusetts, Oklahoma) improve the dissemination of information. However, a regional structure presents challenges in States where direct communication between the State and local partnerships is limited or where occasional friction exists between regions and the State.

SCALE

Major challenges that must be addressed during the seven-year Federal investment are whether the principles of STW can affect the educational experience of a substantial number of young people and whether employers will provide the work-based learning opportunities envisioned by the initiative. An initial task that must be undertaken to bring about "scale" is the building and

operation of a statewide system which fosters the establishment of a sub-State structure, bringing STW to fruition community by community. How to undertake this task is perhaps the single most important decision a State must make. As noted below, States have chosen among regional, district, local and any number of other preexisting structures to bring their initiatives to scale. In some cases, States have been forced to reconsider their decisions, losing precious implementation time. What has become apparent -- both through the 1996 evaluation efforts and the subsequent 1997 site visits and quarterly reports -- is that a State's roll-out structure is a major determinant of whether a State will be able to sustain its STW initiative after the STWO Act sunsets.

Links to Education, Workforce Preparation and Economic Development: Congress anticipated that STW systems would be built, in large part, on a foundation of existing education, workforce and economic development programs. States are aligning STW with workforce development, education and economic development through three avenues: housing STW governance within education, workforce or economic development offices; instituting less formal interagency collaboration at the State level; and encouraging local partnerships to form links among STW and other initiatives. States, such as Maryland, Vermont and Connecticut, have aligned their roll-out with their workforce development or Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) regions. In Florida, 24 new regional workforce development boards (replacing the JTPA Private Industry Councils) have comprehensive goals integrating STW with high-skill, high-wage jobs, One Stop and welfare-to-work. Ohio has organized into 12 regions consistent with its economic development regions. In Nebraska, there are coordinated efforts planned between STW partnerships, Manufacturing Extension Partnership Centers, One-Stops, and JTPA offices to support greater employer services to improve competitive abilities, by providing access to information, resources, and tools needed to develop skilled workers.

Of the 19 States that had site visits, several arrangements for governance were observed. The majority of the States had housed their STW initiatives in their Departments of Education while the balance were housed in agencies responsible for workforce preparation, economic development or an independent office. Regardless of where STW is housed for day-to-day

management, many State STW offices also report to a multiagency steering committee for decision making and leadership. At the local level, some partnerships are required to demonstrate effective links with workforce and/or economic development programs in their applications for funding.

The Mathematica evaluation of STW in 1996 found that State STW initiatives were frequently built on programs originating in vocational educational, including Tech-Prep, youth apprenticeship, and cooperative education. This indicates ties to ongoing programs, but not necessarily to systemic policies that govern core education and workforce development policies. Mathematica found ties to education reform were generally shaky.

Progress of "Roll-out." The site visits and quarterly reports indicate that nearly all States appear to be paying close attention to both the pace and effectiveness of their "roll-out" (the establishment of the sub-State structure). For example, Maryland uses a regional approach. Ten of the 12 Local Labor Market Teams in Maryland (configured on JTPA service delivery areas) have received implementation funds to date; the remaining two are expected to receive funds later this year. In Colorado, 70 percent of the school districts receive funding, with the potential to impact 90 percent of the State's K-12 population. Sixty-five local partnerships receive funding through six Regional Councils and 17 workforce development regions. Twenty-four Tech-Prep consortia are being incorporated into the system to serve as foundations for the Colorado STW initiative.

Still, States vary quite a bit in the percentage of districts that STW funds have reached, even considering the differences in timing of their Implementation Grants. A slight majority of States have altered their roll-out strategies either in response to unanticipated problems or other circumstances. Several of these changes have resulted in either greater or reduced emphasis on regional versus local governing structures. A few States are struggling with the relative importance of readiness/performance versus geography in allocating implementation and continuation funds.

According to the progress measures data, local partnerships increased 61 percent between December 1995 (294 partnerships in eleven States) and June 1996 (932 partnerships reported in 41 States and Puerto Rico).

Use of Indicators to Measure Scale: In addition to using the State-designed and collaborated progress measures, roughly half the States have developed or are currently developing indicators designed to measure participation in STW. Wisconsin, in particular, has progressed in this area by collecting and evaluating data on several scale-based measurements for three consecutive years. The most frequent measures are the number of employers involved and the number of work-based learning spaces. Several of the States that have identified indicators have not yet collected data. The remaining States have progressed well in overall evaluation efforts, but have tended to focus only on results not on scale.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Congress provided seven years for the Federal "seed" money to allow States to design and implement comprehensive STW opportunities systems. Eight States are ready to start the fourth year of their Federal funding, 19 others are starting their third year, and 10 States are in their second year. With the first round of States entering their next-to-last year the issue of sustainability is particularly timely. The key question to consider is will the States be able to build STW systems with broad, lasting impact in the next several years?

State Sustainability: States that have made progress towards sustainability usually have established strong leadership on behalf of STW and incorporated the tenets of STW into education reform, workforce preparation and economic development initiatives. Other steps that some successful States have taken are to: realign resources, enact legislation, and craft State policies implementing legislation.

Site visits showed a cross section of Implementation Grant States that have made the most progress to date: Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Maryland, New Hampshire, North

Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia. Washington supports a sustainable system through statewide education reform efforts and aligning various programmatic funding streams with common goals. In Pennsylvania, new education reform efforts include voluntary academic standards, charter school legislation and the establishment of a "Link to Learn" initiative. All school districts in Pennsylvania are required to submit a strategic plan that includes STW components. West Virginia sustainability efforts include the enactment of State legislation that includes many key elements of its STW plan, implementation of State Board of Education policies to carry out the legislation, and a shared vision for STW with their local partnerships. Other States that have enacted legislation that support their STW initiative include: Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

Nevertheless, not all States have the long-term planning or a clear strategy to identify and commit the resources that will be necessary to sustain STW activities. Site visits also show that several States have lost momentum in their efforts due to changes in leadership or State priorities.

States and local communities appear to have the flexibility they need to build the systems that they want. Very few States and local partnerships have submitted requests under waiver authorities in the STWO Act to the Departments for waivers from related program regulations such as JTPA or the Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act. Of the seven STW-related waiver requests submitted, four were withdrawn, one was disapproved and two were submitted and granted under JTPA authority.

Sustainability of Local STW Systems: Assessment of sustainability at the local level is mixed. Local Partnerships have identified a number of key issues to be addressed including: alignment of financial resources, links to comprehensive education reform, and political support. Partnerships in some States have already been forced to address sustainability since some of them have grants of two-three years duration. All of Ohio's 42 local partnerships whose STW funding expires this year will continue through designation of local funds and resources. But

overall, it seems likely that many States will have to provide greater guidance and support to improve the sustainability of their local systems.

Baseline data on in-kind and new resources leveraged to support STW was provided in the 1996 Report to Congress. New data on leveraged resources will be collected in late 1997, for inclusion in the 1998 Report to Congress.

ACCOUNTABILITY/INTEGRITY

Financial reviews of grantees are being conducted separately from the programmatic reviews and are on a somewhat later timetable. Information from these reviews will be included in next year's report.

"My daughter's level of confidence, her ability to communicate with adults, and her approach to school has improved significantly since her involvement began with School-to-Work."

Michelle Phillips
Parent
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

"As a parent I feel more involved in support of [School-to-Work]. The long term goal is that [Gloria] is going to be employable. She's going to have skills that she can take into the workforce and do something that she likes."

Wanda Weeks
Parent
Greensboro, NC

PART IV: FEDERAL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

At the Federal level, the NSTWO is jointly administered by the Departments, with staff drawn equally from each Department. The Departments' regional office staff works closely with State and local grantees. Individuals are also recruited for the NSTWO from various stakeholder organizations to provide technical assistance and support grantee efforts to build STW systems.

Federal leadership supports STW's emphasis on State and local flexibility while maintaining accountability for Federal funds, and strives to provide activities designed to meet the needs of State and local "customers." While grantees must adhere to applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars and Federal grants administration and fiscal management regulations, there are no STW-specific regulations for State and local programs. The Departments also promote linkages between STW and complementary programs such as those authorized under the Job

Training Partnership Act, the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Most STW funds appropriated (at least 92.5 percent) go to State and local initiatives. The remaining money supports State and local partnerships through a variety of initiatives established at the national level, many of which include stakeholder organizations. STW systems require new levels of participation, and a new breadth of partnership. In addition to administering grants, the Departments have launched a broad information, technical assistance, and research and evaluation effort to address the concerns and needs of all stakeholders. A selection of national activities is highlighted in this section.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As the grant making requirements of the Act diminish in its out-years, an increased emphasis has been placed on providing technical assistance to grantees. The Departments' technical assistance strategy is designed to ensure that STW systems become fully implemented before Federal funding ends, and to reinforce the integration of education, workforce preparation and economic development initiatives. Technical assistance is specifically designed to be responsive to the needs of the grantee. The Departments will continue current efforts to:

- leverage capacity-building to ensure sustainability;
- link public and private sector STW efforts into a complementary national strategy;
- identify and rapidly disseminate effective practices;
- use existing regional office structures to support State and local efforts in building STW systems; and
- engage youth, parents, employers, employees, and educators.

National School-to-Work Learning Center: The Learning Center is the NSTWO's strategic means for delivering technical assistance to grantees and its vehicle for disseminating information to the public. Its services are designed to enhance local choices as they pertain to STW.

The Learning Center has produced 27 practitioner-oriented Resource Bulletins, abstracted more than 700 publications, and collected more than 200 implementation tools -- e.g., how-to guides, survey instruments, integrated curricula, planning guides -- for dissemination over the Internet. In addition, the Learning Center answers an average of 800 information requests over its ?800" number and disseminates roughly 1,500 pieces of information per month.

Maintained by the Learning Center, the ***STW Web Site*** topped 111,000 hits in May 1997 alone and currently features a bulletin board for the Implementation State grantees and another for the Peer Review Group that advises the NSTWO on technical assistance. The web site architecture allows the user to access practical tools that help practitioners implement the many aspects of STW and allows ongoing STW systems to share materials produced. In addition, STW practitioners have immediate access to research and evaluation documents online, information about ongoing grant activities, a calendar of events, initiatives by States, and can query others engaged in STW implementation. Grantees also have access to the Departments' web sites for further information and technical assistance.

School-to-Work Technical Assistance Resource Bank: In 1995 the Departments established a grantee "line of credit" (by allocating a set amount of funds that can be drawn down by grantees) to purchase needed technical assistance products or services from selected technical assistance providers who meet published criteria. Currently there are 193 technical assistance providers representing a wide cross section of expertise from private and public organizations.

The Learning Center manages the market-based STW Technical Assistance Resource Bank through which Implementation Grant States receive customized technical assistance. To date, it has brokered more than 225 technical assistance task orders, with a 48-hour turnaround time. Because the grantees value this method of accessing technical assistance, in July the NSTWO extended access to the Resource Bank to all its Implementation Grantees (State and local). Initially, the Resource Bank was available only to Implementation Grant States.

School-to-Work Institutes: Institutes bring together stakeholder teams from States, regions, and local partnerships for intensive "hands-on" learning and strategic planning that is designed to go deeper into issues and the challenges of system building. Each team (which is likely to include employers, labor, school personnel and parents) that attends a STW Institute is assisted by trained facilitators, recorders, and content-specific practitioners in creating a strategic workplan.

The following Institutes have been conducted:

- Two National Institutes in 1996-97, held in Chantilly, Virginia, and Phoenix, Arizona brought together 30 teams from State and local levels to develop workplans for local partnership implementation.
- In January 1997, the ten 1996 STW Implementation grantees convened stakeholder teams from their respective States in Washington, DC to do in-depth strategic planning around their State grant proposals and performance agreements. The performance agreements were intended to integrate commitments made by these States upon receipt of Federal funds with expectations of the Departments to implement their statewide STW plans. The Institute helped develop action plans to successfully complete the activities each State proposed in the application.
- In June 1997, teams from the ten 1996 STW Development Grant States attended an Institute to help them prepare for their application for Implementation Grants.
- The NSTWO cohosted a State-based Institute with Iowa in January 1997. More than 400 attendees participated in targeted workshops and strategic planning sessions. Ten other States attended the Iowa Institute as training for hosting their own individual State Institutes.
- To date, 1,700 individuals representing a wide spectrum of stakeholder groups have attended STW Institutes. Future plans call for a Benchmarking Institute in October 1997, and partnering with Harvard University for a Principals' Institute in November 1997. Also, 20 States have expressed interest in working with the National STW Office to host their own State Institute.

***State and Local Partnership Grantee Meetings*:** State grantees meet as a national group three times yearly. Local grantees, including Local Partnerships, Urban/Rural Opportunities, and Indian grantees, meet as a national group once a year, with additional regional meetings occurring about twice a year. Last year's regional meetings consisted of technical assistance in the areas of financial management and data collection. There are also occasional meetings of State communication directors to discuss public outreach.

The purpose of national grantee meetings is to allow individuals responsible for the implementation of STW to have an opportunity to share effective practices and to discuss relevant programmatic and administrative issues. The meetings are grantee-led, and topical discussions are designed with grantee input.

A national Peer Review Group has been formed to provide input to the NSTWO on technical assistance needs and programmatic or administrative issues shared by all State and local grantees. The Peer Review Group includes representatives from large and small Implementation Grant States and urban and rural local areas; this group meets as a part of the State grantee meetings.

BUILDING LINKAGES

Building Linkages States

Business & Management: Oregon,* California, and Washington
Health Services: Utah,* Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, California, Iowa, Michigan, Colorado, Kansas, Maine, West Virginia, New York, Texas, Arizona, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Maryland
Manufacturing Operations: Indiana,* Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Pennsylvania
* Fiscal Agent/Lead State

The ***Building Linkages Project*** is a collaborative effort sponsored by the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, the NSTWO and the National Skill Standards Board. It was launched as an opportunity to partner with the STW States as they attempt to "link" the various initiatives of STW systems with high academic standards and industry recognized skill standards, resulting in State-developed replicable models. Cooperative agreements were established in July 1996 with three consortia of STW States working in collaboration with industry, organized labor organizations, secondary schools and postsecondary education institutions.

Each consortium has selected broad career majors that provide the focus for identifying the academic knowledge and skills required for entrance into careers in competitive work environments and admission into postsecondary education and training. These knowledge and skill sets bring together rigorous State academic standards with industry recognized skill standards, provide the basis for curriculum development assessment strategies, and result in the creation of portable skill certificates.

Linking with the Education Community

The development of STW systems includes, among other elements, opportunities for students to learn in the context of a career major or other special interests. Contextual or applied learning helps students make natural connections between academic knowledge and the knowledge and skills used on the job. Teachers, however, are not typically prepared to used contextual learning

approaches in their classrooms. National activity funds support the development of models to train teachers in developing and utilizing applied academic curricula and using contextual learning approaches.

New American High Schools Initiative (NAHS) is a collaborative venture between the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education and the NSTWO to support the reform efforts being implemented by States and communities. Ten showcase schools were selected to present aspects of their reform efforts at a conference for educational policy makers held in May 1996 in Washington, DC. The Department of Education has also contracted for case studies of the NAHS showcase sites to provide a comprehensive review of schools' reform efforts. The current roster of sites for the NAHS are: Encina High School, Sacramento California; Thompson Valley School District, Loveland, Colorado; Sussex Technical High School, Georgetown, Delaware; William H. Turner Technical High School, Miami, Florida; Chicago High School for the Agricultural Sciences, Chicago, Illinois; Fenway Middle College High School, Boston, Massachusetts; Gateway Institute of Technology, St. Louis, Missouri; High School of Economics and Finance, New York, New York; David Douglas High School, Portland, Oregon; Walhalla High School, Walhalla, South Carolina; Hoover High School, San Diego, California; Chicago Vocational Essential High School, Chicago, Illinois; St. Louis Academy, St. Louis, Missouri; and Central Park East Secondary School, New York, New York.

New American High Schools Common Elements:

- Provide opportunity to achieve high levels of academic and technical skills;
- Prepare for college and careers;
- Provide opportunity to learn in context of a career major or other special interest;
- Work with teachers in small learning environments;
- Provide extra support from adult mentors;
- Provide access to a wide range of career and college information;
- Develop strong links between high school and postsecondary institutions; and
- Use technology to enhance learning.

This initiative is focused on high schools that are committed to ensuring that all students meet challenging academic and technical standards and are prepared for college and careers. These high schools are using new instructional techniques, reorganizing the school day, utilizing technology, changing professional development, using community service and work-based experiences to enhance classroom learning and developing new partnerships with employers, postsecondary institutions, community leaders and parents to enhance reform efforts. These schools are also engaged in an ongoing, thoughtful dialogue between their staff and the broader community to determine how they can better prepare all students for college and careers.

The NAHS Initiative is designed to identify and document the work of high schools as they adopt a variety of strategies for education reform. Some of the common elements that define the reform effort are included in the text box on the previous page.

Linking with the Employer Community

In order to help students understand the relevance of school and to prepare them for tomorrow's jobs, employers of all sizes in the private, public and nonprofit sectors need to contribute more actively to the learning and skill preparation of young people. This investment supports a number of activities designed to build employer capacity and increase employer participation in STW system.

National Employer Leadership Council: Efforts to engage employers in STW initiatives gathered considerable momentum during the year. A chief vehicle for this employer engagement has been the National Employer Leadership Council (NELC). The NELC was formed in 1994 to support the role of the employers in the STW system. During the past year, NELC distributed over 20,000 copies of the Employer Participation Model (EPM), a "how-to" guide for employers that outlines 56 ways for employers to get involved in STW. Developed by NELC member companies, the EPM is widely used by employers and their STW partners to organize and expand work-based learning opportunities for students around the country.

There were three other NELC initiatives of note during 1997:

- NELC provided targeted assistance to States and localities as they increased employer involvement in STW systems. Pilots in Colorado and California were very successful and will be expanded to additional States in the coming year.
- NELC initiated an in-depth study of the return on investment of several companies participating in STW initiatives. This study, to be completed in November 1997, will inform the field about what works, what does not work, and what pays off for companies that provide various forms of work-based experiences. Designed for wide distribution, this study will serve as another means of informing how best to engage companies in STW.
- NELC hosted its first-ever, employers-only conference on STW in Denver. Attended by representatives of companies from around the country, the conference highlighted the experience of companies that have participated in STW and served as an effective employer-to-employer exchange.

National Employer Campaign: The National Alliance of Business, along with the National Employee Committee, the National Association of Private Industry Councils, and the National Employer Leadership Council, initiated the National Employer Campaign to involve employers in STW through local Private Industry Councils (PIC) and Local Employer Committees. This effort is intended to increase the awareness and implementation of STW into Department of Labor funded workforce development efforts. Sites that were the focus for this effort were: Arapahoe/Douglas Counties, Colorado; North Indiana; Frederick County, Maryland; Springfield, Massachusetts; Greater Raritan, New Jersey; and Mountain Area, North Carolina.

According to research conducted by the consortium of business organizations operating the campaign, PIC participation in STW increased dramatically over the year. The number of PICs participating as a member of local STW partnerships reached 67 percent of all 640 PICs

in the country. Conversely, only 16 percent of all PICs indicate that they have no role at all in the local STW efforts, compared to 40 percent last year.

Linking with Organized Labor

In addition to the support of business-led organizations, leadership from organized labor can greatly enhance employer engagement efforts. Historically, organized labor has been a supporter of work-based training programs for youth. The STW model, with its emphasis on integrating the academic and work-based learning experiences of young people, depends in large part on its ability to engage front-line workers as equal partners in a system. Targeted investments to support labor participation in STW include the following:

Human Resource Development Institute (HRDI) of the AFL-CIO: The HRDI provides a primary link to organized labor on STW. Through HRDI's efforts, information about STW has been disseminated to local affiliates. Its recent publication, "*Involving Unions in School-to-Work Initiatives, A Guide for School-to-Work Systems and Stakeholders,*" has been written for all partners who are serving on State, regional, or local partnership teams. The purpose of this publication is to promote a better appreciation and understanding of the key role that unions can play in shaping and implementing a STW system. HRDI has also assisted the Departments in recruiting labor representatives to serve on grant reviews, participate in STW Institutes, and serve as panel participants at conferences. They continue to collect and disseminate information about exemplary STW programs that are inclusive of all stakeholders.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT): AFT, as a subcontractor to HRDI, has developed a publication entitled, "*Reaching the Next Step, How School to Career Can Help Students Reach High Academic Standards and Prepare for Good Jobs.*" The AFT is also working closely with business organizations to develop strategies around making school transcripts more meaningful for employers.

SERVING EVERY STUDENT

A critical element in building a comprehensive STW system is the degree to which that system is open and available to every student. Over the last two years it has become evident that support must be provided to assist State and local STW implementors in addressing the needs of a diverse population, to incorporate models that have proven successful with specific populations into the systems being created, and to adapt successful models for a broad student population.

Out-of-School Youth: The Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor and the NSTWO are collaborating on a joint demonstration project to focus on effective employment and training programs for school dropouts and other out-of-school youth. The project looks at ways to serve these youth by incorporating the twin STW goals of high academic achievement and progressive mastery of career competencies. It also is intended to assist these programs to become integrated into State and local STW systems. Eleven competitive grants were awarded by September 30, 1997.

Youth with Disabilities: The National Transition Alliance (NTA) is a technical assistance vehicle being used to ensure the inclusion of youth with disabilities in STW. Jointly funded by the Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the NSTWO, the NTA helps to integrate what is known about the transition of young people with disabilities into the systems being created under STW. Specifically, the NTA is working with States on developing systems, creating standards that reflect the needs of every student, increasing parental involvement, and engaging employers in all facets of STW. In September 1997, 29 of 37 STW States convened in Washington, DC to address how to incorporate students with disabilities into their strategic plans.

NATIONAL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES - PUBLIC AWARENESS

Focus groups with parents, educators and other stakeholders show that a vast majority of the public accepts and embraces STW once they are familiar with the initiative. Parents and educators appreciate that STW is about encouraging students to make informed choices about their future education and ultimately their careers. STW is also about high academic standards, relevant hands-on learning, and local control. Local, State and Federal activities to communicate this message are driven from the ground up. In an effort to address the requests from States and localities, the Departments are in the process of developing a Speaker's Bureau, a Success Stories Library and a Library of Best Practices. Prototype material is also prepared and/or shared that can be customized at the local level. These strategies will help to disseminate information throughout the country, allowing States and localities to learn from one another and to build their own support network.

Advisory Council for School-to-Work Opportunities: The Council is in its second year of providing assistance and strategic advice to the Departments on implementing the STWO Act. The Council is broadly representative of stakeholders in the STW enterprise, including educators, employers, organized labor, community groups, parents, students, and State and local government. It meets twice a year, and is led by John McKernan, former Governor of Maine, and Dr. Jacquelyn Belcher, President of DeKalb Community College in Decatur, Georgia. In its second year, the Council has worked closely with the Departments to identify strategies to sustain the STW movement after the sunset of the Federal legislation. Towards this goal, the Council, at its June 1997 meeting, recommended that the following areas should receive particular attention within the STW system:

- developing intermediary organizations to bring together schools, business and job training entities;
- documenting effective practices;
- investing in staff/professional development for existing and new teachers; and
- ensuring that STW experiences are accepted by postsecondary institutions in their admissions processes.

School-to-Work helps answer the classic questions
I always hear: Why, why why do I have to take this class."
Chichi Azeh, student
Amherst (MA) Regional High School

"What I've learned here I could never learn in a classroom."
Indiana Student in Building
Trades, Career Goal: Architect

PART V: CONCLUSION

This report gives the Departments an opportunity to review the past three years of the implementation of the STWO Act and to look forward to its future. We value this opportunity to share with the Congress our experiences and insight on the progress of implementing the Act. Implementing this Act has provided the Departments with the challenge of working in a truly collaborative manner with each other, States, local communities, and dozens of stakeholders to help our young people acquire the knowledge and skills they need to pursue postsecondary education and careers in the 21st century. We are very pleased that a number of key stakeholder organizations (National Alliance of Business, National Association of Manufacturers, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Committee for Economic Development, American Business Conference; National Conference of State Legislatures; and the U.S. Conference of Mayors) have endorsed STW. Their endorsements are attached to this report.

The STW concept rests upon empirical research in the field of education, human intelligence, and learning theory which indicates that students learn best when material is presented in an applied or contextual manner. Although it may be several more years before there are studies showing significant changes in outcomes as a result of STW intervention, each year there is new evidence from local initiatives to suggest that we are on the right track.

STW is not imposed on a State, community or classroom. It must find its way into a crowded agenda of education reform, workforce preparation, and economic development initiatives. The State or locality must want STW, and they do.

The Act was specifically created to encourage different approaches to STW system building, each according to the dictates of the local communities we seek to serve. Flexibility has been a hallmark of STW. It has allowed many diverse stakeholders and individuals to embrace STW principles and to shape them to meet their own needs. We have learned, however, that this local flexibility can only be as fruitful as its foundation is strong. It is necessary for STW advocates, first and foremost, to agree on what STW is. Secondly, they must to be able to describe with clarity the continuum of STW experiences for a student. This continuum changes from State to State and frequently even from community to community within a State.

STW may be based in any number of State and local agencies. Its foundation may be shaped more by education reform in one State, more by economic development in another or, by workforce preparation in yet another. At this stage, it is not clear whether one area gives STW a better opportunity to meet its full potential for providing meaningful educational opportunities for every student and for being sustained past its Federal investment. However, we know that STW cannot be successful if it does not connect all three dimensions. In particular, it must be incorporated into any education reform movement that takes place in a State or it is unlikely that it will succeed.

There are important signs of commitment and progress. They include:

- *The STW movement has taken hold in a majority of States and in more than 1,000 communities.* As Mathematica's 1997 National Evaluation states, "the Act has set in motion widespread efforts to change education and the way that employers collaborate. Educators and employers alike in large numbers are excited about the prospects for linking school and workplace learning to prepare students better for successful careers."

- *The flexibility in the Act has encouraged a diversity of approaches to STW* -- this diversity can be seen in the State Profiles attached to this report. The Departments have supported this dynamic and evolving approach by disseminating information on best practices from numerous sources. Activities to encourage the sharing of this wealth of information and learning have grown exponentially in the last several years through support of the NSTWO Learning Center and web site, national and State-level Institutes, the line of credit to support services offered by technical assistance providers, grantee meetings, and site visits by national and regional office staff. States and local communities are further aided in their efforts by the significant commitment and level of expertise of public interest groups, education, business and labor organizations, community-based organizations, and others devoted to better preparing students for further education and careers.

- *States are providing solid foundations for their STW systems* according to the site visits and State submitted quarterly reports. This includes providing additional funding for STW and in-kind support, including STW as a key component of school improvement strategies, enacting legislation in support of educational reform and STW initiatives, issuing executive orders, and implementing education and workforce policies that provide guidance and direction to school systems, workforce preparation agencies and others.

- *States are making a commitment to providing access to STW to all groups of students.* Our site visit reports indicate that States are working to meet the needs of out-of-school and high-risk youth, and youth with disabilities in STW systems. The Departments agree with the Mathematica evaluation statement that, "an important measure of success in creating a STW system will be the level of participation in a combination of activities. Over time, the fraction of students who are "multiple component participants" should grow if STW programs are in fact becoming a STW system."

- *Likewise, States and local partnerships are showing their commitment to securing employer and labor participation.* Site visits reports, the National Evaluation, and progress measure data and State and local evaluations indicate that employers, in particular, are becoming involved in local STW partnerships and steering committees, providing work-based learning opportunities, and hosting teachers and counselors in internships.

- *States and local partnerships are making significant investments in staff development.* This investment will lead to long-term change in how our educators teach and how employers support their future workforce. Educating teachers in the tenets of STW will need to remain a major focus at the national, State and local level, particularly when there is a large turnover of teachers. Pre-service and in-service training and certifying of teachers offer opportunities to increase teacher understanding and practice of STW methodologies. Employers must also be encouraged to provide workplace experiences for teachers.

Our experience to date shows that there are a number of areas that must be addressed in the coming year(s) to ensure that STW meets its full potential. These include:

- *the need to increase the level of parental understanding of and involvement in STW.* Parents need to understand that STW does not limit opportunities, but increases

students' awareness of postsecondary education, career options, and access to labor market information and further training and education. Thomas Bailey and Donna Merritt's publication entitled, "School-to-Work for the College Bound," indicates that a principal barrier to the widespread acceptance of STW as preparation for careers and college is the belief that enrolling in a STW program might divert students from academic learning and weaken their preparation for college. The expanded involvement and leadership of postsecondary institutions in STW efforts will be particularly important to ensure parental support.

- *the need to support continued growth of employer participation in STW.* Fewer than one percent of the Nation's employers are involved in STW, and significant challenges to greater employer participation exists such as understanding and knowing how to comply with child labor laws and addressing insurance/liability questions. Many supporters of STW encourage the formation of intermediary organizations to bridge the role of employers and educators in implementing STW systems.

- *the tension between quality and quantity as STW reaches out to serve more and more students and employers.* We need to continue to understand and identify those STW opportunities that truly further a student's learning and ensure that every student has access to those experiences. This issue is particularly relevant in trying to develop a large number of structured and high quality work-based opportunities for students. The responsibility for educating the student goes beyond the traditional classroom and expands the learning experience to the community and workplace. This experience must be designed in such a way that the connections between the employer, the teacher and student are clearly articulated. While workplaces have historically been sites of learning for a wide range of professions (including medicine, education, engineering, and law) it will take time for all of us to be more knowledgeable and comfortable with how students best learn in environments outside the home and the classroom.

- *the need to ensure continued momentum by all States*. It is important for the long-term viability of STW to maintain an ongoing commitment by all key parties. This has not happened in all States that have received implementation funding. It is important to undertstand why this happens and determine how STW can reinvigorated when its loses leadership, attention or resources. The joint support of Governors and Superintendents of Education on behalf of STW is particularly important.

- *the need to support STW partnerships* in their efforts to develop and perform functions that will ensure the sustainability of STW after the Federal funding ceases.

- *the need to ensure that out-of-school youth are adequately served in STW systems*. Currently, we do not have data that captures the participation of out-of-youth in STW. The Departments, however, are sponsoring a two-year study that will examine promising STW systems and program practices for out-of-school youth and are incorporating a focus on out-of-school youth and at-risk youth in the National Evaluation.

The Departments believe that States and local communities are taking steps to improve our educational system so that it better prepares young people for continuing their education and for careers and employment. The STW initiative as envisioned by the Congress is an important part of this forward motion within the educational community and also within the many segments of society that have a commitment to the future of our young people. The long-term impact of STW will depend on its acceptance by students, parents, employers and educators. STW may vary by State and by community, but we are beginning to see changes in how students learn, how teachers teach, how employers work with the education community, and how initiatives requiring multidimensional leadership can be managed collaboratively.

The Departments expect to have all States that want to implement STW systems doing so by the time the STWO Act sunsets. We also expect that the Departments, working with our many public and private partners, will have helped States and local communities build the support necessary to continue a job that is likely to take more than seven years to fully accomplish.

"School-to-career has helped unify and energize our education reform efforts. We're using school-to-career to raise expectations and academic standards for all students to more effectively measure what students know and are able to do, and to break down the walls between individual teachers and academic subjects so that learning is made more meaningful and all students can achieve."

David Hornbeck
Superintendent
Philadelphia Public Schools

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SCHOOL-TO-CAREER INITIATIVES

The Business View

National Alliance of Business • National Association of Manufacturers
U.S. Chamber of Commerce • Committee for Economic Development
American Business Conference

A fundamental purpose of American education is to give all youth the greatest possible opportunity to achieve their highest academic potential and a rewarding life of learning, good citizenship, and successful participation in the American free enterprise system. We live in a world where the workplace and society are changing rapidly, and require a mastery of more advanced academic skills and knowledge than ever before. The modern economy provides the greatest opportunities for those individuals with strong academic skills who can continue learning throughout their lives. Parents, teachers, employers, and school administrators should work together so that educational systems enable all students to succeed in higher levels of education and economic pursuits.

We strongly support school-to-career initiatives as a way of motivating individuals to reach higher levels of academic excellence and equip themselves to succeed in the future. School-to-career initiatives, referred to initially as "school-to-work," combine demanding core academic curriculum with practical work-based application. Research tells us that all students learn more when given the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills to "real world" challenges. The school-to-career learning strategy, linked to high academic standards, can provide better education, workforce preparation, and the ability to learn throughout a lifetime.

Successful school-to-career initiatives:

- Are part of the main, academically rigorous path of education for all students
- Expose students to career options they might not know about otherwise
- Give participants skills that can be applied and adapted to any career of their choice
- Prepare students to choose any course of endeavor including further education

School-to-career initiatives are not:

- Plans to divert students away from school and into the workplace
- Separate paths designed for "slow learners"
- Tracking systems that force students into certain jobs
- Dependent on federal funding or programmatic direction

We believe that an effective school-to-career initiative emphasizes the following:

- **A Primary Goal is Higher Academic Achievement.** School-to-career programs are intended to ensure that all students, college and non-college bound, meet challenging academic standards. Students who complete a school-to-career program should be prepared to succeed in an associate or baccalaureate degree program. In the best of these programs, students can only participate in the work experience component if they stay in school, take a core curriculum, maintain satisfactory grades, and make reasonable progress toward completing a degree.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- **Local Communities Design the Programs.** A school-to-career initiative can succeed only if based on voluntary, local decisions in partnerships between educators, employers, local officials, and ultimately parents and students.

- **School-Based and Work-Based Learning are Coordinated.** Academic curriculum and work place experiences reinforce each other to enhance overall educational achievement. Work-site learning involves practical demands for mathematics, science, reading, writing, social studies, and computer skills. Work-site learning also develops skills that traditional classroom learning does not do as well, such as problem solving, management of time and resources, responsibility, initiative, and communication skills. Students participating in effective school-to-career programs tend to take more courses in advanced math and science, increase their grades, graduate at higher rates, go on to post-secondary education at higher rates, and are better prepared to succeed in jobs. In addition, youth who might otherwise drop out of school are more likely to stay in school and complete their education.

- **Employer Participation Adds Relevance.** Employers should inform schools of the knowledge and skills demanded by the economy of the future and provide the necessary learning experiences.

We believe that employers, educators, and parents must work together to expand school-to-career opportunities, which serve the best interests of our students, our businesses, and our country.

OFFICIAL POLICY

EDUCATION, LABOR, AND JOB TRAINING

SCHOOL-TO-WORK

NCSL's Education, Labor, and Job Training Committee supports legislation and educational programs promoting the ability of all students to make informed educational choices (considerations) and self-determination practices through continued development of partnerships/support with business, parent led and family organizations. This support will expand educational opportunities for all students and will enhance the quality of their learning experience and educational foundation for the future with integration of high academic standards for vocational curricula and programs.

The NCSL Education, Labor, and Job Training Committee encourages the support of business, parent led and family organizations which promotes the distribution of school-to-work moneys, assures federal moneys are approved by the legislature and affirms the right of the legislature to review and conduct oversight of the programs.

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Resolution No. 16

Submitted By:

The Honorable Thomas Menino
Mayor of Boston

The Honorable Sharon Sayles Belton
Mayor of Minneapolis

The Honorable Richard M. Daley
Mayor of Chicago

The Honorable Arlene J. Mulder
Mayor of Arlington Heights

The Honorable Wellington E. Webb
Mayor of Denver

MAYORAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

1. **WHEREAS**, the increasing competitiveness of our global economy requires that our young people be better educated than at any time in our history; and

2. **WHEREAS**, the reduction in federal funding for many "second chance" programs such as job training and literacy makes it even more important that young people get a good education during their school years; and

3. **WHEREAS**, cities with older school systems, as well as communities experiencing rapid growth, are facing major school construction and renovation costs; and

4. **WHEREAS**, educational technology must be made available to needier school districts to mitigate the widening gap between technology "haves" and "have nots;" and

5. **WHEREAS**, mayoral involvement in educational partnerships can produce significant improvements in local schools; and

6. **WHEREAS**, the way the mayor and the schools relate will vary according to local needs and local structures, and all

mayors should be empowered to play an appropriate role in their local schools,

7. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that The United States Conference of Mayors believes that within the context of a collaborative partnership the following should be considered:

   a) Mayors should encourage the adoption of tough academic standards in schools.

   b) Schools should provide adequate training in the basic skills needed to succeed in the current and future job market.

   c) Through the city/school/business partnership, young people need to have many opportunities to develop relationships with adults.

   d) Many local businesses, especially small businesses, should be engaged in school-to-career efforts. Specific goals in terms of the number of placements should be established in these efforts.

   e) Mayors have a role in mobilizing the business community to assist in providing technology to the schools, wiring them, developing the curriculum and training teachers. In addition, mayors can assure that the technology is networked among the schools, libraries and colleges and universities.

   f) Mayors, police chiefs and superintendents should identify initiatives which increase safety in and around schools and on school buses; and

8. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that areas for specific collaboration and joint activity of mayors and superintendents include reading programs, technology, school construction and renovation, social services, economic development, community schools/after-school programs and support for mayoral initiatives; and

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9. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The U.S. Conference of Mayors strongly supports continued expansion of the Title I and school-to-career programs of the U.S. Department of Education; and

10. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The U.S. Conference of Mayors strongly supports increased funding within the U.S. Department of Education to spur new partnerships among mayors, schools, businesses and the community, with such funding including a Mayor's Educational Initiatives Grant program and a "Labor-Management Partnerships" program; and

11. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The U.S. Conference of Mayors applauds in principle the President's Call to Action for American Education for the 21st century and supports the President's school construction and renovation program, technology and reading initiatives, and increased funding for after-school programs; and

12. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The U.S. Conference of Mayors should examine the impact of welfare reform on schools and identify efforts and activities to mitigate anticipated problems; and

13. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The U.S. Conference of Mayors should monitor research and efforts in early childhood programs and identify ways they can foster early learning programs.

Projected Cost: Unknown